

System Configuration Team (SCT)

Reasonable & Prudent Measure #26 Meeting Notes July 26, 2001

Greetings and Introductions.

The July 26 meeting of the System Configuration Team was held at the National Marine Fisheries Service offices in Portland, Oregon. The meeting was chaired by Bill Hevlin of NMFS and facilitated by Richard Forester. The agenda and a list of attendees for the July 26 meeting are attached as Enclosures A and B.

The following is a distillation (not a verbatim transcript) of items discussed at the meeting, together with actions taken on those items. Please note that some enclosures referenced may be too lengthy to routinely include with the meeting notes; copies of all enclosures referred to in the minutes are available upon request from Kathy Ceballos of NMFS at 503/230-5420.

1. Minutes from June SCT Meeting.

Hevlin distributed the minutes from the June SCT meeting, and asked that comments be submitted to him or Kathy Ceballos by the August 23rd meeting.

2. Walla Walla District FFDRWG Meeting Report.

Mike Mason reported that the main topic of conversation at the most recent Walla Walla District FFDRWG meeting was the Lower Granite removable spillway weir. As of yesterday, he said, they began the process of attaching the RSW to the dam; as most of you are aware, there have been some delays with this project, so the District has asked NMFS for an extension to the in-water work window. Hevlin noted that the FFDRWG participants also discussed balloon-tag testing to evaluate RSW-caused direct injury; this test would require a few hours of spill per day for about a week in October or November.

Mason added that a supplemental appropriation for FY'01 has been approved by Congress to fund the repairs to the Lower Monumental stilling basin; the Corps is already

starting the planning process which will allow repair work to begin next summer. Thanks to this appropriation, it looks as though we can finish the repairs in time for the 2003 outmigration, Mason said, adding that the stilling basin repairs will be combined with the installation of additional flow deflectors at Lower Monumental.

There have also been discussions of expanding the powerhouse capacity at McNary Dam, said Steve Rainey. To date, those discussions have involved engineering personnel at BPA and the Corps, but they are being expanded to include biologists from other agencies as well. Most of you are aware of the turbine capacity bottleneck at McNary, said Rainey, which is only 170 Kcfs.

Hevlin noted that the McNary flow deflector project is now underway. The cost will be \$300,000 per deflector; the plan is to finish construction by March of next year. Hevlin said the FFDRWG participants also discussed end-bay flow deflector construction at Little Goose. He added that two mixers are now operating at McNary; the goal is to see whether or not they can affect forebay water temperatures.

Hevlin said the FFDRWG participants also touched on adult PIT detection at various projects, flow-flow PIT detection at McNary, and auxiliary water supplies at Lower Granite, Little Goose and Lower Monumental Dams.

3. Bonneville Decision Document Update.

John Kranda reported that the Corps will soon distribute a draft of the Bonneville decision document for regional review and comment; this process will include a presentation to SCT at the group's August meeting. The ISRP will review the Bonneville decision report in September.

The group did backtrack a little on whether B1 JBS is still the preferred alternative, Kranda said, due to economic concerns as well as a desire for further investigation of the surface collector prototype. In the end, however, the Bonneville decision document work group decided to wrap up the report and seek regional comment, Kranda said.

There has been some discussion about whether the B1 JBS should become a CRFM line-item, at least as a lower priority, added Rainey, or whether that should wait until additional research results are in. The question for SCT is, should we build it if funds are available, or should we wait until more research results are in? It may make sense to put it into the spreadsheet, Hevlin said -- it's really too important to leave off. If the decision is made to defer construction, we can make it a low priority for FY'02. It may make sense, if the Bonneville Decision Document committee is unable to reach consensus on whether or not to go forward with the JBS, to ask the SCT to weigh in, said Rainey.

In response to a question from Bruce Suzumoto, Kranda said the draft Bonneville Decision Document report will detail all of the pros, cons, costs and modeling, monitoring and

evaluation data associated with each alternative. In my opinion, until we complete the review process this fall, it doesn't make sense to commit any significant resources to either option, Hevlin said. I would need to discuss that with the rest of the team, said Kranda, but I tend to agree.

After a few minutes of additional discussion, there was general SCT consensus that the surface collector prototype should not be removed at this time, but left in place to keep the option of further testing open. And again, said Kranda, the Bonneville Decision Document team will provide a presentation on the report, and an opportunity for detailed discussion, at the August SCT meeting. He said the draft report will be distributed in mid-August, and asked the SCT to review it prior to the group's August 23 meeting so that they can come to the meeting prepared to provide comments.

A few minutes of additional discussion yielded the following question for the Bonneville Decision Document team: Should the multiple bypass issue affect the team's decision? Kranda said he would ask that group to consider this question at its next meeting. If it is influencing the decision, said Hevlin, I would like to have the reasons for that concern fully aired.

4. Continued Discussion of FY'02 CRFM Spreadsheet.

Forester noted that, at the last SCT meeting, the group went through the list of high-priority items on the FY'02 CRFM measures worksheet; the items in this group carried a total price tag of \$51.3 million. There was another, separate group items, designated as "high priority, challenged," Forester said, because one or more SCT participant objected to them; the cost of this group of line-items was \$11 million, bringing the total to \$62.3 million. Another group of items, designated "high priority – proposed," would add another \$6.2 million, bringing the total for the high-priority, high priority – challenged and high priority – proposed line-items to \$68.5 million.

Kranda said he had spent a few minutes going through the remaining items in the spreadsheet, and based on his understanding of what needs to go forward, and what will likely be deferred, he was able to whittle the FY'02 CRFM package down to about \$80 million. At his suggestion, the group spend a few minutes going through Kranda's pared-down list, noting areas of agreement and disagreement.

Kranda then distributed a new version of the FY'02 CRFM spreadsheet, revised to reflect the discussion at the last SCT meeting. He noted that the total cost for everything on the current list of FY'02 line-items, including low-priority projects, is just over \$99 million.

The remainder of today's meeting was devoted to continued discussion of project priorities and the FY'02 CRFM spreadsheet. The group discussed a variety of deferrals and cost reductions, totaling about \$19 million; this brought the total cost of the likely FY'02 CRFM program down to about \$81 million, close to the amount Congress has appropriated for CRFM in each of the past several years.

At the conclusion of this exercise, Hevlin and Kranda said they will produce a revised version of the spreadsheet, reflecting the discussion at today's meeting, and will distribute it to the SCT prior to the next meeting of the group.

5. Next SCT Meeting Date.

The next meeting of the System Configuration Team was set for Thursday, August 23. Meeting notes prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.